

VLR - 12/10/98
NRHP - 1/21/99

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Orange Commercial Historic District

other names/site number VDHR File # 275-5001

2. Location

street & number Main, Byrd, Caroline, Church, Chapman, and Short streets; not for publication N/A
Madison Road; and Railroad and May Fray avenues
city or town Orange vicinity N/A
state Virginia code VA county Orange code 137 Zip 22960

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 12/14/98
Signature of certifying official Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is: _____ removed from the National Register
_____ entered in the National Register _____ other (explain): _____
_____ See continuation sheet
_____ determined eligible for the
National Register
_____ See continuation sheet.

Signature of Keeper
Date of Action _____

_____ determined not eligible for the National Register

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Orange County, Virginia

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☐ building(s)
☒ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
61	11	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
61	11	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 2

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC	Sub: Single dwelling; secondary structure; hotel
COMMERCE/TRADE	Business; professional; organizational; financial institution; specialty store; department store; restaurant; warehouse
SOCIAL	Meeting hall
GOVERNMENT	Fire station; courthouse; post office; correctional facility; government office
RELIGION	Religious facility
RECREATION AND CULTURE	Theater; auditorium
TRANSPORTATION	Rail-related; road-related
AGRICULTURE & SUBSISTENCE	Creamery
INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/ EXTRACTION	Communications facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC	Sub: Single dwelling; institutional housing
COMMERCE/TRADE	Business; professional; financial institution; specialty store; department store; restaurant; warehouse
GOVERNMENT	Courthouse; post office; correctional facility; government office
RELIGION	Religious facility
RECREATION AND CULTURE	Museum
TRANSPORTATION	Rail-related; road-related

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7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Commercial Style
Italian Villa
Italianate
Federal
Early Classical Revival
Colonial Revival
Late Gothic Revival
Greek Revival
Queen Anne
Neo-Classical Revival
Moderne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: BRICK; CONCRETE
roofing: ASPHALT; METAL; TERRA COTTA
walls: BRICK; WOOD: weatherboard; STONE: limestone; STUCCO
other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
See continuation sheets.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT
COMMERCE
TRANSPORTATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance 1749 to 1948

Significant Dates 1749
 1847, 1859
 1870-1872
 1908

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Phillips, William B.
 Haskins, Charles, Haskins and Alexander, Washington, D.C.
 Lee Smith & Vandervoort, Richmond, VA
 Miller, A. Stanley, Richmond, VA
 Simon, Louis A., Supervising Architect, Washington, D.C.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
See continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Andrews, James Newman, Jr. Harris Burrus Davenport, Jr., Robert Virgil Fielding, Chester Mack Mayer, Francis Bradley Peyton III, Fenton Somerville, and John Henry White. *An Economic and Social Survey of Orange County, Virginia*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia School of Rural Social Economics, 1939.

Department of the Interior, National Park Service. "National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, St. Thomas' Episcopal Church." Prepared by the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. Copy on file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, 1976.

Gray, O.W. *The National Atlas*. Philadelphia, O.W. Gray & Son, 1878.

Humbert, R.L. *Industrial and Agricultural Survey, Orange County, Virginia*. Blacksburg: Engineering Extension Division and Agricultural Extension Division, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 1930.

Joyner, Ulysses P. *The First Settlers of Orange County, Virginia: A View of the Life and Times of the European Settlers of Orange County, Virginia*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1987.

Miller, Ann Brush. *Antebellum Orange: The Pre-Civil War Homes, Public Buildings and Historic Sites of Orange County, Virginia*. Orange, Virginia: Moss Publications, 1988.

Orange County Review. "Silk Mills Shuts Down." 3 March 1988:1-3.

--. "Silk Mill Was Chamber of Commerce Success Story." 19 November 1992:9.

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Orange Review. "[Architect's Drawing of New Firehouse.]" 17 February 1938:1.

Peters, John O. and Margaret T. Peters. *Virginia's Historic Courthouses*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1995.

Salmon, Emily and Edward D.C. Campbell, Jr., editors. *The Hornbook of Virginia History: A Ready-Reference Guide to the Old Dominion's People, Places, and Past*. Richmond: The Library of Virginia, 1994.

Sanborn Map Company, Fire Insurance Maps for the Town of Orange: 1905, 1909, 1915, 1919, 1925, 1931. Virginia State Library and Archives, Richmond, Virginia.

Schlotterbeck, John Thomas. "Plantation and Farm: Social and Economic Change in Orange and Greene Counties, Virginia, 1716 to 1860." Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1980.

Scott, W.W. *A History of Orange County, Virginia: From its Formation in 1734 (O.S.) To the end of Reconstruction in 1870: compiled mainly from Original Records with a Brief Sketch of the Beginning of Virginia, a Summary of Local Events to 1907, and a Map*. Berryville, Virginia: Chesapeake Book Company, 1962[1907].

Slayton, Paul. Personal Communication, November 1997.

Thomas, William H.B. *Orange, Virginia: Story of a Courthouse Town*. Verona, Virginia: McClure Press, 1972.

--. "Courthouses of Orange County," in *Virginia Cavalcade* Vol. 19, No. 5 (1969):32-37.

Walters, J.P. *Town of Orange--1872*. Redrawn by U.P. Joyner, Jr., 1987. Map on file at the Orange County Historical Society, Orange, Virginia.

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Ave., Richmond, VA 23221

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 20 acres

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UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
1.	17	752540	4236690	2.	17	752840	4237010
3.	17	753080	4236650	4.	17	752560	4236410

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

The district is bounded roughly by Caroline Street on the west, Main Street on the north, May Fray Avenue and Byrd Street on the east, and Church Street on the south.

SEE ATTACHED MAP AT 1" = 200.'

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The district encompasses the historic commercial and governmental center of the Town of Orange.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Debra McClane, Principal Investigator; Kerri Culhane, Architectural Historian

Organization: Gray & Pape, Inc.

date June 1998

street & number: 1705 E. Main Street

telephone 804/644-0656

city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23223

Additional Documentation

Maps

Attached:

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

See continuation sheets.

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name See attached

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

=====
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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SUMMARY

The Orange Commercial Historic District is comprised of 74 resources--61 contributing, 11 non-contributing, and 2 previously listed--and contains the oldest public, religious, and commercial structures in the Town of Orange. The center of town is dominated by the mid-nineteenth-century Italian Villa-style Orange County Courthouse, which is individually listed on the National Register. Commercial buildings, which make up the majority of the contributing structures, tend to be early-twentieth-century brick structures that are one to two stories in height with either classical or Italianate detailing. Dwellings make up the second largest group of contributing resources with the earliest dwelling dating to around 1830. Government and church buildings also are counted among the contributing structures. Among the latter, St. Thomas' Episcopal Church on Caroline Street, constructed in 1833, is individually listed on the National Register. While some institutional buildings reflect high-style design, most of the buildings in the district are modest examples of nationally popular styles or vernacular interpretations. Non-contributing resources tend to be commercial buildings that are non-historic or that have undergone exterior alterations that compromise the integrity of the original structure. The boundaries of the district can be described generally as Main Street on the north, Caroline Street on the west, Church Street on the south, and Byrd Street and May Fray Avenue on the east.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

Orange County is located in the Upper Piedmont region of Virginia and lies approximately 60 miles northwest of Richmond and about 75 miles southwest of Washington, D.C. Located near the geographical center of the county, the Town of Orange has served as the county seat since 1749. The town is situated at the intersection of U.S. Route 15 and State Route 20 and has a current population of about 4100.

The Town of Orange Court House was established in 1749 as the county seat and location of the Orange County Courthouse. Throughout the eighteenth century, the town consisted of little more than the courthouse and public buildings, a few houses, taverns and stores, all of which were supported by the monthly meeting of the court. The town was centered around the courthouse building, which stood near the present-day Southern Railway depot and is believed to have been a frame structure with shuttered windows and brick chimneys. In 1804, the third Orange County Courthouse was constructed on the public lot. No buildings from the eighteenth century survive within the boundaries of the historic district.¹

The town's pattern of development is attributed in part to the subdivision of land undertaken in 1799 by Paul Verdier, a native of Berkeley County, now a part of West Virginia. Verdier purchased land

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in Orange Court House and platted the property into town lots. Verdier's home of Peliso (c.1806), located on Bellevue Avenue behind the present courthouse, was one of the significant early homes in Orange. In 1796, a post office was opened by the national government, further enhancing the importance of the growing community.²

The oldest structures within the district date to about the 1830s and include a commercial structure, a residence, and a church. The Sparks Building at 122-124 West Main Street is a two-and-half-story brick structure that is believed to have been built around 1830 for James Forbes. The front facade of the building is laid in Flemish bond while the sides and rear are laid in five-course American bond. Although some exterior alterations have taken place, including the construction of a modern storefront, the building retains much of its original material.

The Holladay House, located at 155 West Main Street and now operated as a bed and breakfast, was built around 1830 as a store for the Lynchburg-based mercantile business of Dinkle and Rumbough. The building, located on the north side of the intersection of Caroline and Main streets, is a two-story brick structure laid in Flemish bond. A one-story, Doric portico is centrally located on the front facade and is accessed by a set of double stairs. Gauged brick arches over the windows are covered in stucco to simulate stone.

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church on Caroline Street was built in 1833 in the Jeffersonian-inspired Roman Revival style. The designer is believed to have been William B. Phillips, one of Jefferson's workmen at the University of Virginia, and was based upon Jefferson's design for Grace Church (now destroyed) in Charlottesville.³ The entrance is a distinguished one-story, three-bay portico *in antis* featuring Doric columns. The Gothic Revival stained glass windows were added in 1900 and the parish hall at the rear of the church was constructed in 1912 and enlarged in 1928.

In the late 1840s, the Orange & Alexandria Railroad purchased part of the public lot as a right-of-way through town. The county court negotiated a land exchange with resident Richard Rawlings for the lot at the northwest corner of Main Street and Madison Road. With a location for the new courthouse chosen, the Honorable R.H. Field, judge of the circuit court, engaged architect M. McKinnie to design the new building. The design was typical of the traditional temple-form courthouse of red brick with white columns seen throughout Virginia. There was, however, a delay in the real estate transaction with Rawlings. Three years later, the court decided to obtain another design for the courthouse. The fourth Orange County Courthouse is attributed to Charles Haskins of the Washington, D.C., architectural firm of Haskins and Alexander. The building was constructed between 1858 and 1859 and is designed in the Italian Villa style with the most prominent feature being its centrally located, three-stage tower with overhanging eaves. The entrance is located atop a flight of steps that leads to a three-part arcaded entry. The loggia that once surrounded the building is now enclosed. Although the style may appear to have been avant garde, it has been noted that there was precedent in the county and the surrounding area for use of the style, and that the Italianate

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influence would have projected a modern and progressive image of Orange to travelers along the newly formed rail line. Court was first held in the new courthouse in July 1859.⁴

The Miles B. Lipscomb Store, located at the corner of Church and Mill streets, was constructed in 1853 and is an example of mid-nineteenth-century commercial architecture with later additions. The two-story building is constructed of brick laid in stretcher bond. The first floor of the building is a storefront with a central entry door flanked by nearly full-height paired round-arched windows. A frame addition with clapboard siding was constructed on the east side of the store, probably in the late nineteenth century. Most recently, the building has served as apartments.

Few new buildings were built in Orange between 1860 and 1870. After the Civil War, the town slowly regained its economic prosperity and professional offices were opened in town including those of dentists, doctors, and lawyers. Among the many merchants in town were general dry goods merchants, liquor dealers, a saddler, a tanner, a druggist, a carriage maker, and a milliner.⁵

Many religious congregations and institutional organizations began building structures along the streets of Orange during the late nineteenth century. The Nazareth Baptist Church organized in 1871 and erected a sanctuary on Church Street. The current sanctuary, located at 115 West Church Street, was constructed in 1913 and can be described as a vernacular style church with Gothic Revival detailing such as pointed-arched door transoms and windows. A two-part tower tops the projecting brick entry vestibule. The current exterior brickwork dates from a 1992 refurbishing. The congregation of the Nazareth Baptist Church is largely African American.

In 1873, the 1850s Baptist church, located behind the courthouse, burned. The Baptists then obtained a lot on East Main Street and constructed a new sanctuary. This building was destroyed in the 1908 fire. At that time, the church moved to its present location at 123 West Main Street. In 1909, a brick Gothic Revival building was constructed that features lancet windows with limestone tracery, a corner tower with castellated parapets, and brick buttressing with limestone caps. Alterations to the church were performed in 1921 and 1954.

Other institutional buildings erected during the late nineteenth century include the Masonic Opera House (149 W. Main Street) which was constructed in 1885, and the Trinity United Methodist Church (143 W. Main Street) built in 1892. The Opera House served as a meeting hall for Independent Orange Lodge No. 138, A.F.&A.M., which was authorized in 1825. The original facade was six bays wide and two stories in height with tall arched windows above and round-headed windows below. The centrally located, pedimented entrance was accessed by a short flight of steps. The building featured a gable front roof that was possibly a parapet wall. Between 1921-1922, the building was remodeled to its present Colonial Revival-style appearance by Benjamin Pitts and operated as the Pitts Madison Movie House. The Opera House is a two-story brick structure with a full-height Corinthian columned portico. In 1991, the interior was renovated for use as law offices.

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The Trinity United Methodist Church is an L-shaped brick structure with an entrance tower located at the intersection. The building reflects Gothic Revival styling in its pointed arches, leaded glass transoms, and rose windows. An addition was constructed to the rear of the church in 1979.

Several bank buildings serve as prominent landmarks within the district. The former National Bank of Orange, located at 102 East Main Street, was built in 1892. The building was untouched by the 1908 fire, which was stopped by the then-adjacent Sanford Building. The bank is an impressive example of Neo-Classical styling with engaged fluted limestone Corinthian columns and a full entablature with a pedimented front entrance. The front facade of the masonry structure is sheathed with smooth limestone panels. The building was enlarged in 1919 when two additional bays were added to the eastern side. Most recently, the building was occupied by Jefferson National Bank. The building was vacated in 1998 when Jefferson National was purchased by Wachovia, which closed the branch. The building has since been auctioned to a new owner. The former Citizens National Bank, now NationsBank, is located at 113 West Main Street and was constructed in 1925. The two-story brick structure has a three-bay entrance with two columns set on piers *in antis*. Although the original windows have been replaced, the building is still a fine example of the Neo-Classical style. A. Stanley Miller of Richmond is credited as the architect and C.R. Butler was the builder.

Dwellings were common in the downtown area into the late 1800s, but now are mostly located in the residential sections flanking the downtown core. The oldest surviving residence in the district is located at 126 West Church Street and dates to c.1880. This house is an asymmetrical, three-bay, single-pile frame structure. Two brick chimneys project through the standing-seam metal gable roof. The Dodson House, located at 148 West Main Street, was constructed c.1900 and is the last residential building on Main Street that is used as such. The building was formerly known as Mrs. Thompson's boarding house. Three dwellings located along Caroline Street date from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century and are still occupied as homes. Probably the most unusual of these dwellings is the late-nineteenth-century structure at 140 Caroline Street because it is the only example of a double house located within the district. This two-story, frame structure has two three-bay, side-passage units joined under a gable roof with a central front gable. A one-story, full-width shed-roofed porch spans the front facade.

Several residential structures in the district have been converted into commercial use as the downtown area developed including both late-nineteenth-century dwellings and early-twentieth-century dwellings. Examples of such converted dwellings are the Herndon Realty office (c. 1930) at 151 West Main Street; Herndon & Grymes, Surveyors, (c. 1930) at 147 Caroline Street; and The Country Mouse Shop (1898) at 143 East Church Street. In the 1940s, the Hiden-Rawlings House (c.1870) on Caroline Street was moved from its original location at the corner of Caroline and Main streets and is currently used as the Children's House Montessori School.

Commercial activities in the town of Orange originally congregated around the railroad tracks and

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the courthouse. Around the turn of the twentieth century, Railroad Avenue was lined with retail merchants as well as restaurants and specialty shops. An 1872 atlas depicts the arrangement of lots in town and indicates the function of a few properties. St. Thomas' Episcopal Church is identified on Gordonsville Road, along with a "colored church" located to the south. The Methodist Church, now on Main Street, was located on the opposite side of the street. In 1872, the Baptist Church was located on East Main Street three lots east of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad tracks. The Presbyterian Church was located on a small lot on Plank Road (Byrd Street), just south of the intersection with Church Street.

Other lots identified on the map include the courthouse lot, which by that time had moved to its current location at the corner of Main Street and Madison Road; the county jail lot, which remained at the old public lot near the train tracks; the clerk's office lot, located diagonally across from the courthouse; and the Orange & Alexandria Railroad depot lot, which was located south of its present location.

The 1878 O.W. Gray Atlas of the United States includes a map of Orange Court House with property owner names listed and indicates some businesses in the town. Building footprints are also depicted. The Gray map shows that the commercial center of town was located along Railroad Avenue and fronted onto the railroad tracks. Several stores and the Hotel Morris are noted on the west side of Railroad Avenue. The Hotel Coleman was located on the southwest corner of Main and Chapman streets, which was a short block away from the passenger station. None of Orange's early hotel structures survive today. The site of the Hotel Morris is now occupied by the Orange Farm and Garden Shop (120 East Church), which was built around 1920.

On the Gray map, the county jail, previously located on the old public lot near the railroad tracks, is shown behind the courthouse, but the clerk's office remained across the street. The Orange & Alexandria Railroad depot and station are depicted in the same location as the 1872 maps shows them, but Gray's map also shows the depot for the narrow gauge Potomac, Fredericksburg & Piedmont Railroad located at the southern end of Plank Road. The Nazareth Baptist Church is shown on the north side of Church Street. As previously mentioned, the congregation was organized in 1871 and built a church on this lot. Large residential lots are located throughout the rest of town along Main Street, the Gordonsville Road, on Church Street, and along Plank Road.

The earliest available Sanborn Map Company insurance maps of the Town of Orange date to 1905 and indicate that the town's 800 residents were supporting numerous and varied commercial enterprises along with many large dwellings located within the town limits. Business establishments depicted on the map include general stores, drugstores, grocers, and stores specializing in furniture, hardware and jewelry. The presence of pool halls, saloons, livery stables, wagon shops, banks, hotels, and restaurants attests to Orange's status as a commercial and transportation center with frequent traveling guests.

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In 1908 a fire raged through the eastern part of downtown and devastated almost all buildings in the area. After five hours, the fire subsided when it reached the Sanford Building (next to the National Bank, but demolished in 1954) near the corner of Madison Road and Main Street. Buildings destroyed in the fire included Rickett's Drugstore and the upstairs apartments; Gaines's pool room and soft drink saloon; Levy's Busy Corner; the Waite & Chewning furniture store; the newly constructed Baptist church on East Main Street; the Southern Railway telegraph tower and passenger depot; the Thompson Building occupied by a contractor; the Perry Building occupied by a clothing store; a grocer; and several apartments and houses.

Following the 1908 fire, some buildings were rebuilt as soon as possible. As mentioned above, the Orange Baptist Church relocated to West Main Street. Levy's Busy Corner, 114-118 East Main Street, was probably the first building to be rebuilt. Located at the corner of Railroad Avenue and East Main Street, this mercantile business was an important commercial anchor in the district. Levy's has been described by local historians as "Orange's premiere emporium."⁶ The building contains three separate storefronts and has housed such businesses as the mercantile business, a furniture store, and a Sanitary grocery in a later addition to the rear of the building.

The Gaines Building, located along Railroad Avenue behind Levy's Busy Corner, was the origination site of the 1908 fire, which began in one of the upstairs apartments. After the fire, the Gaines Building was rebuilt with three storefronts facing onto the railroad tracks. When rebuilt, the structure housed the Grasty Bros. Sash, Door & Blind Factory and George Gaines's Saloon. Later, a soft drink emporium and a pool room were located there.

The train station, 122 East Main Street, was another structure that was constructed soon after the fire. Now known as the Southern Railway Depot, the one-story structure is clad in light brown brick with brick corner quoins and segmental and jack arches over windows and doors. The large gable roof is pierced by dormers and is covered with pressed metal. A shed overhang roof supported by chamfered brackets covers the waiting platform. Classical details such as Palladian windows were also used in the design. In 1965, a derailed train destroyed the projecting ticket window on the western side of the building. No longer used as a passenger or freight station, the building has been restored in the past year for use as a community center.

The Rohr Building (125/127 E. Main Street), the Matthews (formerly Willis) Building (129 E. Main Street), and the Waugh Furniture Building (130/132 E. Main Street) were also rebuilt after the fire. These buildings are typical examples of the brick commercial structures that appeared along Orange's Main Street in the early twentieth century. The buildings can be described generally as two-story brick structures with symmetrically placed windows, flat roofs with parapet walls, and storefronts located on the first floor. The facades of these buildings were often enhanced with cast iron or pressed metal cornices with modillion blocks or dentils and decorative brickwork. Alterations to these buildings include replacement of original windows, removal of decorative cornices, and alterations

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to the storefronts. The buildings have been used in a variety of ways, housing such enterprises as a movie theater, a grocer, a drugstore, furniture stores, restaurants, and a hair salon and spa.

In the early twentieth century, the buildings on Church Street that now house Satchell Funeral Home and Walker Barber Shop were known as the Orange Creamery. The creamery complex manufactured ice cream.

By 1915, the population in the town of Orange had climbed to 1200 and from the number of buildings depicted on the 1915 Sanborn maps, it appears that the town had completely recovered from the 1908 fire. In 1910, the Presbyterian church moved to its present location at the corner of West Main Street and Caroline Street. New buildings and businesses were located in the lots along East Main Street that appeared as empty lots in 1909. An office and the Wilbur movie theater were located in the Rohr Building and a grocer, hardware store, dry goods store, and a dwelling occupied by Dr. McMurrin filled out the rest of the block. Except for the dwelling, which was removed in 1916 for construction of the Gill Hardware store building, all of these buildings still stand on East Main Street. The Hankins House, located at 138 East Main Street, was quickly rebuilt after the fire and is one of the few remaining residential structures in the district. Presently, the house is used as an optometrist's office. The 1915 map also shows a large brick warehouse building marked "building materials" behind these stores and fronting onto May Fray Avenue. This warehouse (112 May Fray Ave.) was built in 1910 for Larkin Willis who used it as storage for his hardware and implements store. The building currently houses the Art Center in Orange. The adjacent building (118 May Fray Ave.) initially was used for lumber storage but was converted for use as a wholesale grocery and today serves as a framing shop.

The 1915 Sanborn map also shows that Waugh's Furniture Store had expanded and built another building adjacent to its earlier East Main Street structure. Grymes Drugstore, an old Orange business, was located on East Main Street in the Perry Building at that time. Today, Grymes is located on West Main Street in the former General Dollar Store. A 5&10 store was noted as occupying the Fry Building at 209 West Main Street. Rickett's Drugstore and a gentleman's clothing store are located at the northeast corner of Main Street and Madison Road. The Perry Building, the Fry Building, and the Rickett's Building were demolished in the late 1960s and replaced by Perry Plaza. Rudisill's general store and the American Bank, located at 230 and 231 West Main Street, and shown on the 1909 and 1915 maps, were destroyed by the widening of Madison Road in the 1970s. A former state Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) store, located at 104 West Main Street and the Jaffe Art Gallery at 108 West Main Street, now occupy the site of the Hotel Coleman, which was demolished in the 1950s. The ABC store was recently remodeled into offices altering its Moderne-style appearance.

The Sanborn maps indicate that new businesses located in the town between 1909 and 1915 including a printing business, a music and jewelry store, and new hardware stores. New businesses located

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along Chapman Street and Railroad Avenue included a produce shop, a barber, restaurants, and an office building. The most modern addition to Chapman Street was the introduction of a "garage" and "auto livery" building. Several Orange businesses catered to the increased automobile traffic coming through the area. The former President Madison Inn (James Madison Hotel), located at 120 Caroline Street and constructed in 1928, was an early hotel in town and now serves as an adult care facility.

In 1935, the Orange Post Office was constructed at 129 West Main Street. This one-story, brick structure is a reserved example of the Colonial Revival style. A limestone coved cornice is present along the front of the building and wraps around the sides for three bays. The centrally located entrance is flanked by fluted Doric pilasters with ornate wrought iron lanterns to either side. A cornerstone indicates that the building was completed under the direction of Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect, and Neal A. Melick, Supervising Engineer.

In 1938, the Orange Volunteer Fire Co. erected a new building on the north side of Main Street on a lot purchased through the sale of the Perry estate.⁷ The new brick building, constructed just west of the 1935 post office building, boasted three engine doors and provided a more suitable location for the department. The old firehouse, located behind the courthouse, was sold to the county for office space. The 1938 firehouse on Main Street is now operated as a The Firehouse Cafe.

Today, Norfolk & Southern Railway trains continue to use the tracks through town, but no trains, passenger or freight, stop here. The traffic volume along U.S. Route 15 increased to the point that in the 1970s the Virginia Department of Transportation rerouted traffic from Main Street onto the Madison Road bypass, which bisects Church Street through the southwest section of the historic commercial district. This was the first major alteration in the street layout of the town in over 100 years. The creation of this bypass resulted in the demolition of buildings at the intersection of Main Street and Madison Road and along Church Street. The Civil War monument, erected in 1900, was relocated out of the path of the new road and several buildings along Church Street, including the Emanuel Baptist Church (128 Church Street), were left at the base of the road embankment, well below the road grade. This bypass also routes traffic away from the pedestrian-oriented businesses of Main Street to the strip developments on the edges of town.

The Town of Orange retains the appearance of a late-nineteenth- to early-twentieth-century small commercial downtown. While some new buildings have been constructed since 1940, the scale and setback of the existing street is almost always maintained, which lends a cohesive feeling to the district especially along both sides of Main Street. The majority of buildings in the district were constructed between 1908 and 1930 and reflect Orange's status as a regional commercial and transportation center. These buildings together with those that date to before 1908, reflect the development of Orange from its earliest days as a courthouse town and railroad stop, through its post-fire reconstruction and into its modern period.

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ENDNOTES

1. William H.B. Thomas, *Orange, Virginia: Story of a Courthouse Town* (McClure Press: Verona, Virginia 1972) 7; Ann Brush Miller, *Antebellum Orange: the Pre-Civil War Homes, Public Buildings and Historic Sites of Orange County, Virginia* (Moss Publications: Orange, Virginia 1988) 12.
2. Miller, 12; Thomas, 15.
3. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination for St. Thomas' Episcopal Church." Copy on file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond.
4. John O. Peters and Margaret T. Peters, *Virginia's Historic Courthouse* (University Press of Virginia: Charlottesville 1995) 112.
5. Thomas, 50.
6. Slayton, personal communication.
7. *Orange Review*, "[Architect's Drawing of New Firehouse]" 17 February 1938:1.

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Note: All resources are contributing unless marked (NC) for noncontributing.

Byrd Street

40 Byrd Street, ca. 1909, two-story, L-shaped, gable-roofed dwelling deck-roofed, two-story section built into crook of L, front projecting gable cut away at first floor corners, creating a polygonal bay, one-and-one-half story gable ell at rear, sided in wide asbestos or other synthetic horizontal siding with wood grain, currently Stearns Coleman, Surveying

Caroline Street

Caroline Street, Rawlings House, ca. 1870, two-story, frame, central passage, single-pile former dwelling with side gable roof, two, two-story projecting polygonal bays on facade, two-story porch with gable roof supported by Ionic columns and pilasters, moved from corner of West Main & Caroline to make way for Esso(Texaco)Station in 1946, ell at rear of building, flat-roofed one-story addition to south east corner, vinyl siding and replacement windows, currently Children's House Montessori School

119 Caroline Street, St. Thomas' Episcopal Church (NRHP, 1979), 1833, Greek Revival temple-form church, recessed portico with Doric columns *in antis*, four Doric pilasters (2 antae, 2 corner pilasters), double-leaf paneled wood door surmounted by rose window, lunette window in pediment, four-part steeple composed of three telescoping square segments with an octagonal cupola featuring Doric pilasters, round-arch louvered vents, a dentil cornice and

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heavily-ribbed metal cap, late-19thC Gothic Revival alterations to building include addition of pointed-arch windows and replacement of clear-glass windows with leaded, stained glass figural/pictorial windows, Parish Hall addition to the rear of the church, begun in 1912 and enlarged in 1928, Rector's study, a small brick building attached by an arcade to the north side of the church, was built in 1975

120 Caroline Street, President Madison Inn, 1928, five-bay, two-and-one-half story brick Colonial Revival hotel with gambrel roof and parapet end walls, two, two-story, three-bay-wide, slightly forward-projecting flanking wings, first floor 6/6 wood sash windows with semi-circular-arched wood panels above with keystone in brick round arch, modillion cornice and four full-height pilasters with unidentified capitals(Egyptian Revival in character),double-leaf, multi-paned front door with surround featuring broken pediment with urn and garland motif, Lee Smith & Vandervoort of Richmond were the architects, currently houses adult care facility

129 Caroline Street, Powell Motor Company, 1930, one-and-one-half story gable-fronted 6-course American bond commercial building with stretcher bond facade, stepped-gable parapet, rear concrete block addition with segmentally-arched roof clad in standing seam metal, sash windows with segmental brick arches, facade remodeled with Colonial Revival motif for current occupancy of the James Madison Museum, pediment appended to stepped gable, showroom windows bricked-in, wooden Ionic half-columns on concrete piers span facade

130 Caroline Street, James Madison Texaco, 1928; 1980s, one-story, five-bay-wide side gable concrete block building with brick veneer, one-story, three-bay gable porch supported on Tuscan columns, original masonry commercial structure located at rear of 1980s Colonial Revival addition, currently the Orange County Historical Society (NC)

136 Caroline Street, ca. 1875 two-story cross gable frame dwelling, standing seam metal roof, cornice returns, single-leaf wood/multi-pane door, one-story, one-bay porch at intersection of front and rear wings, horizontal synthetic siding

137 Caroline Street, Halley Service Station & Restaurant, ca.1930, one-story, gable-roofed concrete-block service station with projecting wooden gable-roofed porte-cochere supported by brick piers, asphalt or asbestos roofing, one-story shed addition attached to south side, currently vacant.

140 Caroline Street, 1880-1890, two-story frame double house, two three-bay, side-passage units joined under a gable roof with central front gable, one-story, shed-roofed porch with square wood posts, 2 single-leaf doors are flanked by sidelights and surmounted by three-paned transoms

141 Caroline Street, Jiggs Craun Auto Repair & Taxi Stand, ca. 1930, one-story, concrete block commercial building with stuccoed brick facade, eccentric shape, built diagonal to street corner, late-glass windows across front, shed-roofed overhang wraps around front and is clad in standing seam metal, cloth awning, garage bay and concrete-block addition built on east side along hill slope, currently Earl's Glass Shop

146 Caroline Street, 1870s, two-story cross-gabled frame dwelling, standing seam metal roof, single-leaf door flanked by sidelights and surmounted by transom, cut-away corner on front gable at first floor, one-story flat-roofed porch with gable roof inset, turned wood porch posts with brackets

147 Caroline Street, 1930s, one-and-one-half story, three-bay-wide by three-bay-deep Cape Cod Colonial Revival house, two gable dormers on front, full-width shed dormer across back, projecting gable-roofed vestibule entrance, fluted Doric pilasters and entablature door surrounds on front and side doors, side door located in hip-roofed, one-story addition to south side, wide, wood clapboard siding, central (ridge) brick chimney, currently Herndon & Grymes. Surveyors

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W. side, Caroline St., n. of Madison Rd., Tex Webb's Grocery, 1940s, one-story concrete block commercial building with brick facade, three-stepped parapet front, three-stepped parapet side walls with terra cotta coping, articulated brick piers at corners, plate-glass windows across facade, modern commercial glass/metal door, currently Jean's Cafe

Chapman Street

109-113 Chapman Street, Railway Express/Orange County Review, ca. 1905-1919, commercial building composed of four separate buildings joined together, 109 Chapman Street, one-story, with a brick stepped parapet facade, possibly ca. 1905, 2 concrete-block warehouse-type rear additions made ca. 1919, 113 Chapman Street added ca. 1919 with 1960s alterations, two-story concrete block commercial; building with terra cotta coping across the flat roofline, full-width shed overhang ties both halves together, currently Town Warehouse/Travel Agency.

119 Chapman Street, ca. 1919, two-story, three-bay brick commercial building, 5-stepped parapet side walls with interior chimneys, corbeled brickwork cornice and recessed brick panels, remodeled for use as police station - first-floor windows bricked-in, shed overhang added, currently Orange Police Department.

120 Chapman Street, ca. 1909, two-story brick, two-bay commercial building with three-stepped parapet side walls in American bond, stretcher bond facade, 2/2 wood-sash windows at second floor, first floor plate glass windows with transoms and double-leaf entry door, single-leaf side door, north wall rebuilt, currently Quality Printing

124 Chapman Street, ca. 1910, two-story, four-bay brick commercial building, simple brick detailing at cornice, entrance and first floor remodeled, second-floor window bricked-in, currently Custom Printing

125 Chapman Street, Samuels Building, 1919, one-story brick commercial building, pressed metal cornice with shell motifs separated by floral bands and fleurs-de-lis, plate glass windows, recessed entry, concrete block shed addition on north side with parapet front

127 Chapman Street, 1960-1997, one-story, two-bay gable-fronted metal structure, former warehouse, veneered in random-rubble stonework, currently Faith in Christ Community Church (NC)

East Church Street

Southeast corner East Church & Mill Streets, Miles B. Lipscomb Store, 1853, two-story, three-bay-wide and four-bay-deep brick commercial/domestic building, hip roof, asphalt shingles, storefront, central entry door flanked by nearly full-height paired round-arch windows, wooden pilasters, three-bay-wide, two-story frame building with clapboard siding appended to east side, doorway added to the western bay of addition, windows altered, currently known as Yellow Store Building & Apartments

120 East Church Street, Virginia Central Railroad Passenger Depot, ca. 1920 one-story frame train depot, clapboard siding, four sliding wood loading-dock doors (2 on west, 2 on east side), low-pitched gable roof with deep eaves supported by wood brackets, shed overhang over(former)ticket window, now modern entry door, platforms removed, large gable roof/metal sided warehouse appended to south end of depot, two associated buildings to east: gable-roofed warehouse, asphalt or asbestos shingle siding, small gable-roofed frame shed with exposed rafter ends, asphalt shingle roofing and weatherboard siding, currently Blue Feed Store Office & Warehouse

129 East Church Street, Merchants Grocery Warehouse, ca. 1940, two stories at facade, three stories at west elevation, concrete block construction with metal casement windows, modern brick wall/foundation veneer on facade, one-story, eight-bay porch, currently Sherman's Plumbing Warehouse & Office

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143 East Church Street House, Country Mouse Herb Shop, 1898, two-story late-19C vernacular and Queen Anne dwelling with cross gables on west and east sides, cornice returns in end-gables, one-and-a-half story gable-roofed integral porch with round-arched 2/2 wood sash window in wood-shingled front gable, small eyebrow dormer in half-story of gable, porch roof/room supported by paired colonettes on square wood piers

West Church Street

102 West Church Street, 1920s, one-story, three-bay-wide masonry commercial building, stuccoed brick facade, building angles to southwest, low pitched gable standing seam metal roof, former loading dock along east side, concrete block addition to rear, small shed extension on west side, currently Orange Farm & Garden

110 West Church Street, ca. 1905, one-story gable-fronted former livery stable, 14 bays deep, converted 1919 to emporium/mercantile, gable front interrupted by perpendicular wall/chimney, west side boxed in with flat-roofed section, new plate glass windows, new brick work on front, shed-roofed porch with metal posts on concrete block piers, currently Not the Same Old Grind Coffee House

111 West Church Street, 1940-1980, conglomeration of commercial buildings built between ca. 1940 and the 1980s, one-story low-pitched gable-roofed metal building, garage is concrete block construction with flat- and shed-roofed sections, with industrial metal roll-up garage doors, one-story, flat-roofed off-white glazed brick 1940s section with plate glass windows and a multi-pane wood and glass garage door fronts Chapman Street, currently Tom's Automotive (NC)

115 West Church Street, Nazareth Baptist Church, 1913, one-story, three-bay-wide by five-bay-long, frame and masonry gable-front vernacular church with Gothic Revival detailing, two-stage tower tops projecting brick entry vestibule, frame belfry at top of tower with paired pointed-arched louvered vents, bell-shaped metal roof, pointed-arched transom and windows in vestibule, segmental arches over facade windows, flat lintels over side windows, windows glazed with a purple/white opaque mottled glass, church rebricked in May 1992

118 West Church Street, Orange Creamery, ca. 1909, two-story, four-bay-wide by five-bay-deep brick commercial building with decorative brickwork at cornice, 5-stepped parapet side walls with terra cotta coping, 8/8/4 metal sash windows, one-story shed addition to west side, three-bay addition to rear, currently Satchell Funeral Home

119 West Church Street, 1930-1940, two-story, two-bay rusticated block interpretation of the American Foursquare style of dwelling, hip roof clad in asphalt shingles, projecting two-story bay on east rear corner, full-width, one-story shed porch across front with square wood posts

122 West Church Street, Orange Creamery Annex, ca. 1909, one-story brick, flat-roofed commercial building, 2-stepped parapet side walls, broad, low-pitched full-width gable-roofed porch, wrought-iron posts, facade part stone veneer, part clapboard, currently Walker Barber Shop

126 West Church Street, ca. 1880, asymmetrical three-bay-wide, single pile, two-story vernacular frame dwelling, gable roof clad in standing seam metal, exterior (west) end and interior (east) end brick chimneys, 6/6 wood sash windows, one-story shed-roofed porch, brick-text or asbestos brick-texture siding

128 West Church Street, Emanuel Baptist Church, 1910, one-story, three-bay-wide, five-bay-long vernacular church with Gothic Revival details, pointed-arched windows, pointed-arched louvered vent in entry tower, patterned shingles in gable/second tier of tower above brick vestibule with flared standing seam metal hipped roof topped by a square frame belfry capped with steeply-pitched pyramidal metal roof

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Madison Road

102 Madison Road, ca. 1930, one-story, low-pitched gable-fronted commercial building constructed of concrete block, two plate-glass windows and double-leaf glass and metal commercial doors on symmetrical facade, currently Lam Brothers Unfinished Furniture

East Main Street

102 East Main Street, National Bank of Orange, 1892, two-story Neoclassical/Classical Revival masonry bank building, engaged fluted Corinthian limestone columns *in muris* with full entablature, facade sheathed in smooth limestone panels, pediment and paired windows over front door

112 East Main Street, Ricketts Building, 1910, two-story, horizontally-rusticated brick commercial building, 5-stepped parapet side walls, eight second-floor windows replaced with louvered vents, recessed brickwork around window openings, recessed panels between windows and cast or pressed metal cornice, first-floor plate glass windows

114-118 East Main Street, Levy Building, 1909, two-story, four-bay-wide by one-bay-deep commercial building plus five-bay addition, three storefronts, rusticated brickwork at first floor, two window styles: 1/1 wood sash windows flanked with 1/1 sidelights; and 1/1 wood sash windows, grouped windows have segmental arches above, single windows have jack arches, brick double frieze above second floor windows, metal cornice with finials, modillion blocks, cornice with dentils above first floor, 4-stepped parapet ell of common brick, first floor replacement plate glass windows

East Main Street b/w Railroad Tracks and Short Street, Southern Railway Passenger Depot, 1909, Colonial Revival, one-and-one-half story, buff-colored brick Colonial Revival train station, gable roof with pressed-metal cladding, wrap-around shed overhang supported by chamfered wood brackets, Palladian window and pilastered dormers, modillion blocks in gable ends and along cornice line, brick quoins at corners

125-127 East Main Street, 1910, two-story, five-bay-wide masonry commercial building, 1/2 wood sash windows at second, cast iron/metal cornice with modillion blocks, stepped parapet sidewalls with terra cotta coping, facade laid in stretcher bond, recessed panels around windows/above each window, shed roof bulkhead to west with stepped parapet and terra cotta coping, first floor plate glass windows, formerly the Wilbur Theater, now Willis Building

129 East Main Street, Matthews Building, 1910-1914, two-story, four-bay-wide, brick commercial building, recessed panels around/segmental arches over windows, metal cornice with floral motif, brackets, and dentils, first floor remodeled with stuccoed piers, plate glass windows, metal and glass double-doors

130 East Main Street, Z.W. Chewning Furniture (Waugh Furniture #1), 1909, two-story brick/masonry commercial building, two storefronts separated by brick pier, four 2/2 wood sash windows paired in two recessed brick panels at second floor level, metal cornice with modillions and dentils, stores combined into one restaurant, shallow shingled shed overhang over first floor, four large kitchen vents/metal chimneys on west side, currently the Happy Garden Chinese Restaurant .

131 East Main Street, 1910, two-story brick/masonry commercial building, four round-arch, 1/1 sash windows across second floor, rectangular recessed panel spans facade above second floor windows, stepped and gable parapet with lunette above the recessed panel, currently Morris Office Supply

132 East Main Street, Ware & Watts Furniture (Waugh Furniture #2), 1910, two-story, four-bay-wide masonry/brick

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commercial building, two store fronts, cast/pressed metal cornice with paired brackets, bull's eyes and zig-zag floral pattern on frieze board, Five-stepped parapet side walls, first floor remodeled, wood shingle shed roof over three-part plate glass windows and entrance of each storefront, front doors recessed, cased-in to standard size doors, currently Logan's Salon & Spa

133 East Main Street, Alley Building, 1930s One-story, approximately 8-10 feet wide, recessed entrance, masonry commercial building bridges narrow alley between Gill Hardware and Morris Office Supply, single door and large, multi-paned window are the only features of the facade, currently American Insurance Services

135-137 East Main Street, Gill Hardware Building, 1917, Two-story, six-bay-wide brick commercial building, two "units" - 135 & 137 East Main Street, recessed brick panels over and around windows, segmental arches over windows, cast/pressed metal architrave above first floor level, modillion cornice with round-arch pediment and finials, #135 has large plate glass windows, #137 entrance recessed under integral canopy/porch, converted into an auto garage

138 East Main Street, Hankins House, ca. 1909, two-story brick Queen Anne dwelling, pyramidal hipped roof, complex of projecting bays and gables with overhanging eaves, polygonal bays on north and east sides, rectangular bay on west side, gable ell to south with interior end chimney, decorative brickwork below cornice and at corners, pressed metal in gables, peaked windows in gables with diamond-pattern panes (quarrels), porches enclosed with vertical wood, currently Stephen F. Lord Optometry Office

West Main Street

NW corner W. Main & Madison Road, Orange County Courthouse Complex (NRHP, 1979), 1859, Italian Villa style, one-and-one-half story, brick courthouse, square three-stage tower, three-part arcade entrance, modern glass entrance doors, flat-roofed loggia(now enclosed), deep bracketed tower cornice, hyphens connect Clerk's Office (1894)to west(1894)and Jail(1891)to north

102 West Main Street, Higginbotham Law Office, 1980s, one-and-one-half story, five-bay-wide by two-bay-deep brick-faced office building, Mansard-style roof clad in slate with hipped dormers, one-bay addition to main block to south (NC)

104 West Main Street, ABC Retail Store, 1934-1950, Moderne/stripped classical one-story limestone-sheathed former Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Store, central plate glass window flanked by curved glass-block walls, two doors flank glass-block, broadly-fluted limestone, lower 1/3 story of facade sheathed in green marble panels, two stars carved in relief at top corners

108 West Main Street, Jaffe Art Gallery, 1950s, one-story brick commercial building with false-front second story with four glass block windows, plate glass windows span first floor (NC)

110 West Main Street, Orange County Office Building Annex, 1980s, two-story, two-bay brick office building, four 1/1 metal sash windows at second floor, first floor has only one single leaf door(NC)

112-114 West Main Street, 1946, two-story brick commercial building, two-part facade, six windows across second floor, shallow cast metal modillion cornice, horizontally rusticated brickwork at first floor, brick quoins around windows, built as hardware store, remodeled in 1980s to accommodate Orange County Office Building, first floor entry recessed, flared hipped hood covered with standing seam metal over entrance, two fixed arched windows

113 West Main Street. Citizens National Bank (now NationsBank), 1925, two-story, three-bay-wide, five-bay-deep

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bank, finished in buff brick, central door located between two smooth stone columns *in antis* on concrete piers, Egyptian-revival-inspired capitals, A. Stanley Miller of Richmond, VA, architect, C.R. Butler, builder, drive-through added to west side, all windows replaced with fixed metal/tinted glass

118-118A West Main Street, Page Drug Store, 1926, one-story, stepped gable front commercial building decorative brickwork, corbeled brackets, cast concrete caps, first floor tiled walls (8x8 square ceramic tiles), cast or pressed metal cornice, currently Slayton Law Office and Darby's Needlecraft

120-120A West Main Street, 1920s, two-story, four-bay brick commercial building, horizontally rusticated brickwork, recessed panels around/jack arches over second-floor windows, cast or pressed metal cornice, vertical-siding-clad metal panel above first floor, first-floor plate glass windows, currently Lacy's Florist/Taff Lawton Office

122-124 West Main Street, Sparks Building, ca. 1829, two-and-one-half story, five-bay-wide by three-bay-deep Federal period commercial/domestic building, side walls laid in 5-course American bond, facade laid in Flemish bond, two eastern bays clad in clapboard, modified into modern storefront, bay window with shake roof added to west end of facade, one-story concrete block addition, two story gable-roofed ell at rear

123 West Main Street, Orange Baptist Church, 1909, Gothic Revival, hipped roof with central front gable and parapet, pointed arch windows with limestone tracery, corner tower with castellated parapet, buttresses with limestone caps, 1921 and 1954 additions to the rear of the building

128 West Main Street, 1970s, one-story, rectilinear, concrete block commercial building with brick-veneered facade, one-story, one-bay gabled porch, recessed entry, plate glass windows, currently Grymes Drugstore (NC)

129 West Main Street, Orange Post Office, 1935, one-story, five-bay, symmetrical, Colonial Revival post office, limestone/terra cotta coved cornice, limestone lintels over 8/8 wood sash windows, wrought iron and glass lanterns flank modern glass/metal commercial door with fluted Doric pilaster surround, fanlight, built under the direction of Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect, and Neal A. Melick, Supervising Engineer

130 West Main Street, Grymes Drugstore (former), 1950s, two-story, four-bay-wide masonry commercial building, first floor faced in thin opaque green-black vitreous panels, brick facing on second floor, plate glass windows across first floor (NC)

132 West Main Street, Willis Insurance, 1960, two-story, three-bay flat-roofed concrete block commercial building faced in smooth masonry panels, 1/1 metal sash windows at second floor, plate glass window flanked by 1/1 sash windows at first floor (NC)

134-136 West Main Street, Orange County Economic Development Office/ 5th Avenue Boutique/Ober Office/Tucker Realty, 1965, one-story, gambrel-roofed masonry commercial building with brick veneered facade, stepped parapet side walls, three storefronts with plate glass windows and metal/glass commercial doors (NC)

137 West Main Street, Orange Volunteer Fire Company, 1938, Colonial Revival two-story, three-bay-wide by seven-bay-deep Colonial Revival building laid in decorative brick bond (three rows of stretcher bond per row of alternating headers/stretchers), brick quoins, molded brick watertable, cornice wraps front and sides, stepped parapet and decorative brickwork, three round-arch garage bays with limestone keystones, bays enclosed with windows/standard door, currently the Firehouse Cafe

143 West Main Street, Trinity Methodist Church, 1892, L-shaped Gothic Revival church, two intersecting gable wings.

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square entry tower/steeple set into the intersection, tower consists of brick vestibule, belfry with pointed arches and pinnacles, spire, on two sides of tower are paneled oak double doors surmounted by pointed-arched, leaded glass transoms, ca. 1979-1981 one-story brick addition with flat roof, 1982 handicap ramp

148 West Main Street, ca. 1900, two-story, cross-gable- roofed dwelling with front gable and gable-roofed ell, projecting polygonal bay, standing seam metal roof, cornice returns on west and east gable ends, low-pitched gable-roofed garage (c. 1960s) with two garage-door bays and a central standard-size door located to the south east, formerly Thompson's Boarding House, currently the Dodson House

149 West Main Street, Masonic Hall/Opera House, 1885, two-story, three-bay-wide, four-bay-deep Colonial Revival brick theater with full-height Corinthian order portico, pediment contains Independent Orange Lodge no. 138, AF & AM Masonic emblem, triple-sash round-arch windows flanking standard height double door with round-arch fanlight, remodeled ca. 1920 in Colonial Revival style, remodeled 1991 into Carter Law Office

151 West Main Street, House, ca. 1930, two-story, two-bay-wide, two-bay-deep brick American Foursquare dwelling, hip roof clad in standing seam metal, central front gable, one-story portico with paired, square wood posts

154 West Main Street, Esso Service Station, 1946, streamlined Moderne architecture, one-story, masonry service station with metal siding, curved wall and "streamlined" details, office/store with plate-glass and metal-frame wall, two garage bays, roll-up doors, remodeled into Texaco Service Station with vertical-siding-clad box cornice/roof, large gas-station canopy/gas pumps in lot

155 West Main Street, Dinkle & Rumbough Mercantile, ca. 1830 Federal five-bay-wide, two-story Flemish bond brick Federal-period commercial/domestic building, side gable roof with parapet walls, interior end chimneys, roof clad in standing-seam metal, double-leaf, paneled wood doors with single-pane lights, plain glass transom, one-story Doric entry portico set on double stairs, gauged brick arches over windows are stuccoed to mimic stone lintels, currently Holladay House Bed & Breakfast

Southwest corner West Main & Caroline Streets, Orange Presbyterian Church, 1910, three-bay-wide by six-bay-deep church, portico with four rendered Tuscan columns, two corner pilasters, wooden pediment with lunette and modillion blocks, 6/6 wood sash windows with round-arch lights above, late interpretation of Jeffersonian Classicism/Roman Revival, multiple additions to rear, one-bay hyphen, three-bay, two-story block connecting to four-bay, hipped roof addition, breezeway to Fellowship Hall (1970s), cruciform beige brick building with smaller gables inset into the intersection of the main gables

May Fray Avenue

112 May Fray Avenue, 1910, two-story brick warehouse with three-stepped gable parapet, bricks corbeled at wall edges, middle of second floor level on facade, loading dock across front, two loading dock doors w/herringbone pattern, round plain glass window in gable, currently Art Center in Orange

118 May Fray Avenue, People's Wholesale Grocery, 1919, two-story brick warehouse, articulated piers, recessed brick panels around windows, six-stepped parapet side wall, two full-width shed roof overhangs suspended on wire braces over concrete loading docks along east and north sides, two-story concrete block addition with shed roof to northwest, six-bay concrete block garage at north corner of property, currently Buchanan & Kiguel Custom Picture Framing

Railroad Avenue

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110-112 Railroad Avenue, ca. 1909, two-story brick commercial building, four-stepped parapet side walls, facade divided into three storefronts: two four bays wide and one three bays wide, with recessed entrances, plate glass windows and transoms, three hip-roofed canopies, each with rows of colored lights running perimeter underneath, are suspended from cables attached at second floor level, site of the building in which the 1908 fire started, now known locally as the Sherman Pool Room/ Billiard Building

Railroad Avenue, ca. 1919, two-story, three-bay-wide brick commercial building, three-stepped parapet side walls, plus one step rear addition, facade brickwork includes recessed panels around second floor windows, rectangular recessed panels between windows and cornice (all headers in panel), cast or pressed metal cornice above first floor. First-floor windows half boarded-up, metal awning added, replacement cornice, currently the Coleman Pool Hall

Short Street

114B Short Street, 1960s, one-story gable-roofed concrete block house over garage, west elevation is two stories: first floor houses garage and basement; second floor is first floor of house, two interior slope brick chimneys (NC)

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Orange Commercial Historic District is significant as an example of a late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century commercial town and as the commercial center of Orange County for the past two centuries. The town is also significant for its role in local government as the county seat of Orange County since 1749. The center of town is dominated by the Italian Villa-style courthouse, which was built in 1859. The Town of Orange remains active as a government, commercial, and transportation center. The offices of lawyers, banks, and other professionals line Main Street along with service industries and governmental buildings. The historic district contains a diverse collection of historic commercial buildings that exhibit a number of architectural styles that were popular in America from the 1830s through the 1940s. These buildings reflect the development of Orange from its earliest days as a courthouse town and railroad stop, to its era of rebuilding after the devastating fire of 1908, to the transformation of the town during the modern era of the automobile. The district is eligible under Criterion A for its role as a courthouse town since 1749 and for its role as the commercial and transportation center of the county and under Criterion C for its architectural significance as the embodiment of an important conglomeration of distinctive building types and styles that date from the early nineteenth century through the twentieth century. The resources found within the historic district are locally significant in the areas of the history of architecture, government, commerce, and transportation.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Permanent European settlement did not occur in the area of Orange County until the early eighteenth century. Until that time, most settlement in Virginia was concentrated in the Tidewater region. Early settlers were primarily occupied with agricultural pursuits, although the mining of iron ore was also an early endeavor, mostly notably undertaken by Governor Alexander Spotswood. Spotswood, who patented land along the banks of the Rapidan and North Anna rivers, founded a settlement of German immigrants and engaged them in mining activities. This led to the establishment of Fort Germanna in 1714, the first official settlement in the area that would become Orange County.

In August 1734, the Virginia House of Burgesses adopted "An Act for Dividing Spotsylvania County," which resulted in the creation of Orange County from the western part of Spotsylvania. The newly formed polity was named for William IV, Prince of Orange, who married Princess Anne, daughter of George II of England, in the same year. The new county encompassed a large part of the Piedmont frontier and was bounded on the east by a newly defined line between the parishes of St. Mark and St. George, on the south by Hanover County, on the north by Lord Fairfax's grant, and

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on the west "by the utmost limits of Virginia," which at this time stretched as far as the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River. Such expansive boundaries served the dual purpose of encouraging settlement in the western part of the colony as well as serving as a stand against the French claim to the Ohio Valley region.

The first session of the county court was held in January 1735 in a house owned by Colonel Henry Willis, who served as the first clerk of the court. The house was located in the eastern part of the county on Black Walnut Run. In April 1735, the governor directed that the Orange County court should be located on the south side of the Rapidan River between present-day Somersville's Ford and Raccoon Ford, slightly east of the point where present-day U.S. Route 522 crosses the river. In 1749, as a convenience, the courthouse was moved to the newly designated and centrally located county seat of Orange Court House. The public lot consisted of a jail, clerk's office, and stocks. For 100 years, the courthouse was located on this lot.

County residents actively took part in the American Revolution. The militia was formed and a committee of safety was organized. No major battles were fought within the county, but many of its residents were members of the Culpeper Minutemen, who played a part in the Battle of Great Bridge (1775).

In June 1799, the county court announced that it would receive proposals for a new courthouse to be built on the existing public lot. The third Orange County courthouse was completed in 1804 and was set back about 100 feet from Main Street. The courthouse square was enclosed by a rail fence, and a clerk's office and jail were also built on the lot.

The first few decades of the nineteenth century were a time of internal improvements in Orange County. One of the most important improvements was the increase in the quality and number of roadways in the county. In 1810, the Swift Run Gap Turnpike Company was created, but proved to be an economic failure. The road, known as the Orange Turnpike or the Old Turnpike, is denoted on several nineteenth-century maps.

A diversified agriculture and social economy grew out of the depression following the War of 1812 and served to strengthen local economic ties as opposed to ties to external markets. By the mid-1850s, though, the increase in wheat and tobacco prices coupled with the completion of transportation routes ushered in an era of increased commercial activity within the town and the establishment of social organizations. Many religious institutions that had been organized earlier now set about erecting permanent buildings of worship.

Beginning in the 1830s, Orange Court House became an important regional center serving as the location of the courthouse and the post office. Because of the increasing activity, the General Assembly passed an act in March 1834 allowing for the incorporation of Orange as a town, but no

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action was taken to put the legislation into effect. In 1838, the boundaries of Orange County were changed once again when Greene County was formed from the western end of the county. This would be the last realignment of Orange County's territory.

Despite the lack of incorporation, the community of Orange Court House continued to grow and buildings continued to be built. Between 1833 and 1834, St. Thomas' Episcopal Church was erected on Caroline Street. The church building was only the second of the parish; the congregation formerly met in the Brick Church at Meadowfarm. When that church was demolished after the American Revolution, Episcopalians congregated informally at various locations. Other churches were also built in Orange in the decades just prior to the outbreak of the Civil War including the Methodist (c. 1830), Presbyterian (1853-1854), and Baptist (c. 1856) churches.

During the 1840s, the county's transportation system was augmented by the arrival of the railroad and the creation of turnpikes. In 1840, the Louisa Railroad came to Gordonsville and in 1847, the Orange & Alexandria Railroad obtained its charter and sought to make Orange Court House a permanent station. The rail line would run from Alexandria to Gordonsville, where it would connect with the Virginia Central Railroad from Richmond. The county court granted the Orange & Alexandria right-of-way through the public lot, even including a portion of the courthouse building. The court negotiated with Richard Rawlings for an exchange of property for a new courthouse site. For Rawlings's Orange Hotel lot at the northwest corner of the intersection of present-day Madison Road and Main Street, he would receive in return an equal part of the public lot. The fourth Orange County courthouse was constructed on this property in 1859.

Prior to the Civil War, Orange was enjoying economic prosperity due in part to new transportation routes that provided county agricultural producers increased and easier access to eastern markets. In December 1855, the General Assembly again took up the matter of incorporating Orange as a town. The Assembly approved the incorporation, but specified that in order for the measure to go into effect, a majority of qualified voters should give their written consent. This was not accomplished until after the Civil War.

Between the fall of 1863 and the spring of 1864, there was much fighting in and around Orange County, although only a skirmish occurred within the town of Orange Court House. During the winter of 1863-1864, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was headquartered just outside of the town, although the offices of the Confederate Provost Marshal and the Quartermaster Department were located in town near the railroad tracks. The Orange & Alexandria lines also served as an important link in moving men and supplies.

During the Civil War, many of the buildings in Orange Court House, including some private homes, were utilized by the Confederate troops. St. Thomas' Episcopal Church was used as a hospital after the battles of Cedar Mountain, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania Court House.

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Many histories also record that General Robert E. Lee and General J.E.B. Stuart worshiped at the church while the Confederate troops wintered along the Rapidan during 1863 and 1864. The church housed refugees from Fredericksburg while the courthouse basement was used as an armory during the Civil War by the Montpelier Guards and the jail was used to confine Confederate deserters. In 1862, as Federal troops drew near to the courthouse town, the Orange clerk of the court was given permission to remove all the county's records to "a place of safety." For this reason, Orange County retains its records back to its founding of 1734.

After the war, Orange residents returned to their homes and resumed their mostly agrarian way of life. The loss of property and economic security created a difficult environment. Local government was under the direction of the First Military District but by 1870, Virginia had been readmitted to the Union. In 1860, there were over 6000 slaves listed in the Orange County census; after the war, many of these residents chose to live in the two towns of Gordonsville and Orange Court House. Some white residents chose to leave the county, resulting in a slight reduction in population, however, by 1880, the population was once again on the increase.

The General Assembly amended the charter of incorporation of the Town of Orange in 1870 and 1871. In March 1872, a petition was filed in the County Court for an election of town trustees. The election was held on 3 June and the first official meeting of the Town Council was held on 28 June 1872. Orange Court House had finally achieved town status. In 1890, the official name of the town was shortened to Orange.

Agriculture continued as the main occupation of county residents, but with the loss of slave labor, different methods of farming appeared. Wheat and corn were produced on smaller farms and specialized industries such as stock breeding, dairy farming, and poultry raising also increased. Orange, located in a transportation hub, experienced commercial growth throughout the remainder of the nineteenth and into the twentieth century with the establishment of banks, wholesale stores, merchant mills, an ice factory, and such improvements as paved streets, electric lights, and a library.

The clerk's office was moved in the 1890s from its Main Street lot across from the courthouse. The 1905 Sanborn shows the courthouse, county jail, and clerk's office at the corner of Main Street and Madison Road. The former courthouse building, located on the old public lot near the railroad tracks, was used at the time as a general store and furniture store.

One of the most defining moments in the history of modern-day Town of Orange occurred on November 8, 1908 when a fire swept through the eastern half of the town, destroying all buildings in that area. *The Orange Observer* reported the details of the fire which raced along both sides of Railroad Avenue, along the south side of East Main Street to Chapman Street, and on the north side of East Main Street, destroying everything between the tracks and what is now May Fray Avenue.

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The fire started about 5:30 a.m. in the apartment of Colonel Towles Terrill. Terrill was living above Rickett's Drugstore on the second floor of the Gaines Building on Railroad Avenue. After lighting his pipe, Terrill had thrown the match on the floor, thus starting the fire. A general alarm was sounded and bucket brigades were formed. The town's "fire department" consisted of two hand-drawn, 300-gallon, wheeled water tanks, 142 feet of hose, and a supply of buckets and axes. There were no paid or volunteer firefighters in the town. Even with numerous volunteers, the fire spread rapidly and little was saved. A firefighting crew with a steam-powered pumper and large water tanks arrived from Charlottesville and joined in the battle. When the fire was finally subdued, it had claimed most of the eastern half of town with losses estimated at over \$100,000. Attempts were made to rebuild the town as quickly as possible. Some businesses rebuilt and some new businesses emerged. Many of the buildings along East Main Street were constructed during that period.

Between 1910 and 1930 the total population of Orange County declined. An analysis of this decrease revealed that migration out of the county, especially by people aged 20 to 44, was the basis for the reduction. Many younger people left Orange in hopes of finding employment and financial security in some of the surrounding urban areas.

During the first few decades of the twentieth century, Orange's dominance as a railroad center also began to decline. Trains continued to stop in town through the 1930s, but the trains were rapidly being replaced with automobiles, which could be obtained from a number of Orange businesses. In 1906, there were approximately 600 automobiles registered in the State of Virginia with about 40 of these in Orange County. In 1910, the Orange Automobile Club was established and served as exclusive agents for selling autos. In February 1913, the club, renamed the Orange Automobile Company, had opened a garage at the corner of Wall (Chapman) and Church streets to sell Ford, Reo, and Buick products. In the ensuing years, the company changed hands and names several times and by 1920 was known as Roberts Brothers and dealt in Ford cars and trucks, Fordson tractors, and Oliver farm equipment. Other automobile dealers cropped up in the area around Wall Street including Bates Brothers (1914), dealers of Dodge and later Nash cars, and the garage of James Riley Macon and Manley Carter (1915) for Overland autos. Both of these dealerships had originally operated livery stables in Orange. Indian motorcycles were sold in Orange by C.D. Quisenberry.

The popularity of the automobile soared in the next two decades. By 1930, there were over 373,000 autos licensed in the State of Virginia. The Town of Orange became a regional center for automobile sales and services, perhaps due to its convenient location at the intersection of the two major transportation routes of U.S. Route 15 and State Route 20. Practically any make of automobile could be purchased in Orange at that time. Bates Brothers Motors was still located on Wall Street selling Plymouths and Chryslers. Fords were sold by Orange Motors and W.C. Graham was selling Hudsons and Dodges in a garage located on Madison Road. Powell Motors, located on Caroline Street in the building presently occupied by the James Madison Museum, sold Nash and Star autos. The parking lot to the rear of the National Bank was the site of Ware Chevrolet Sales and Services. In total, there

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were 32 businesses in Orange County that dealt in automobiles and their accessories and many of them were located along the former Wall Street in the Town of Orange. Some of these dealerships still exist, although they have been moved to the edges of town. Orange Motors serves as the local Ford dealership; what had been Ware Sales and Services is now Herndon Chevrolet and Oldsmobile; and Reynolds Pontiac and Cadillac is Orange's oldest dealership under the same family management.

Between the late nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, both agriculture and manufacturing prospects in the county increased. In 1929, on the eve of the Great Depression, there were 1279 farms in the county with an average income of just over \$1100, which at the time kept pace with the rest of the state. In 1929, there were 20 manufacturers in the county who employed 204 persons; by 1937, there were only 13 manufacturers listed in the county, but these concerns employed 700 people. A 1930s manufacturing survey noted that much of the progress and prominence of the county was due to its accessibility.

Most of the industries located in Orange were classified as "Food and Kindred Products" by the U.S. Census of Manufacture. The Rapidan Milling Company, which was originally granted milling rights in 1772, produced flour, meal, and feed of all kinds. The American Silk Mills, Inc., was established in the Town of Orange in 1929. This New York-based operation brought in raw silk, processed it, and then sent it out as finished material. During World War II, the mill was awarded a presidential citation for its war efforts in producing silk parachutes for Allied troops. When it opened, the mill employed 150 people on 3 shifts, 24 hours a day, 6 days a week. At its peak, the mill employed about 500 people. The Orange Produce Company was established in 1918 and served as a distributor to northern markets of local eggs, poultry, and butter. In 1936, a metal-fabricating plant, later known as Virginia Metal Products, Inc., began manufacturing library book stacks and moveable metal walls. Other non-agricultural related businesses included the *Orange County Review* newspaper, a velvet manufacturing plant, the Orange Try-Me Bottling Company, and several building contractors.

In the last fifty years, Orange County's population has doubled. Increased population in surrounding areas coupled with Orange's proximity to important regional cities, makes the county a convenient place to live. Although the county retains much of its rural character, small pockets of development are found throughout the county. The Town of Orange, through steady growth and progress, also retains many of the advantages of Virginia's small towns. It is readily accessible to interstate highways and lies at the junction of two of Virginia's designated Scenic Roads. The designation of State Route 20 as the Constitution Highway has highlighted the area's historic heritage. Lake Anna and Lake Orange serve to lure fishermen to the area, as the National Park Service's Wilderness National Military Park draws those interested in Civil War history.

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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Orange Geological
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Orange

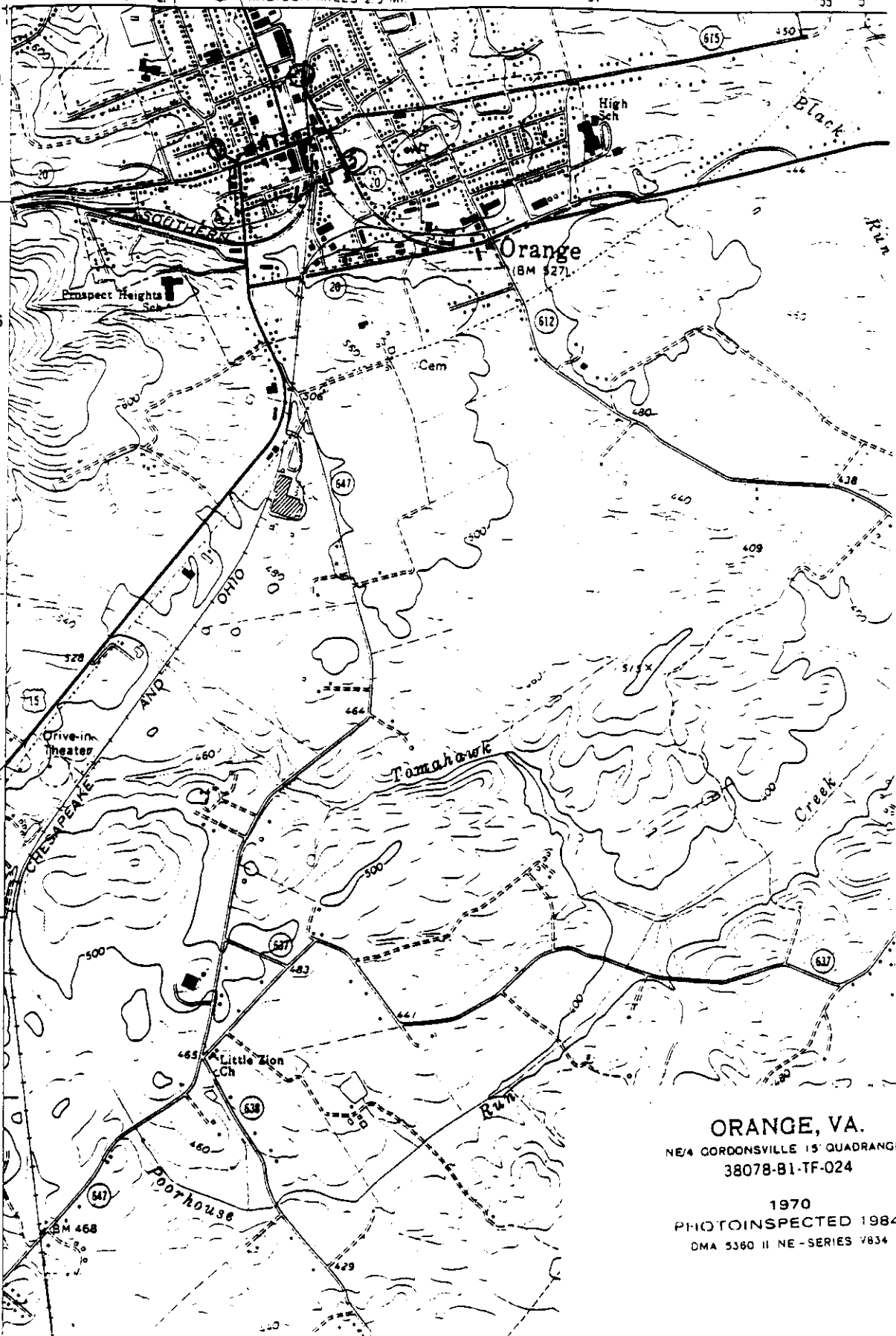
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ORANGE, VA.

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